

Remarks

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-9, 12, 13, and 15-25 are currently pending and stand rejected. Applicants assert that the claims are now in condition for allowance as set forth more fully below.

Double Patenting Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-9, 12, 13, and 15-25 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of US Patent No. 6,748,066 and as being unpatentable over claim 1 of US Patent App. No. 10/861,375.

Applicants hereby traverse these double patenting rejections and reserve the right to present future arguments in favor of allowability over the double patenting rejections. It should be noted that a terminal disclaimer for US Pat. No. 6,748,066 has already been submitted on October 5, 2004, in response to a previous office action. Therefore, this double patenting rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

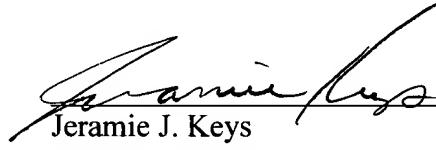
Furthermore, to expedite prosecution at this time, Applicants have submitted a terminal disclaimer referencing U.S. Pat. App. No. 10/861,375. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4, 6-9, 12, 13, and 15-25 are allowable over the double patenting rejections for at least these reasons.

Conclusion

Applicants assert that the application including claims 1, 2, 4, 6-9, 12, 13, and 15-25 is in condition for allowance. Applicants request reconsideration in view of the remarks above and further request that a Notice of Allowability be provided. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

No fees beyond the fee for one terminal disclaimer are believed due. However, please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3025.

Respectfully submitted,



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